

REMARKS

Claim 6 has been amended according to the objections raised by the Examiner. Thus, Claims 1-9, and 12-15 are pending in the present application. As this amendment concerns only an informality, Applicant respectfully requests to enter the above amendment.

Claim rejection under 35 USC §103:

Claims 1-6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), as being unpatentable over Cox et al.(US Patent No. 5,790,781) in view of Hinderks (US Patent No. 6,041,295).

The Examiner states that Cox teaches a system including stereo audio codec to process digital audio signals into a digital stereo audio signal including a left and a right channel and routes the stereo signal to speakers 18 and a headphone 19. Applicant agrees with the Examiner's evaluation. However, as also stated by the Examiner, Cox is silent as to how the connection is established. In all prior art known, such a connection is either done via a switch to select one of the output devices or in parallel to select both of the output devices at the same time.

The present application chose a different solution. According to the independent claims 1, 6 and 12, the headset is coupled with one of the stereo channels and the speaker is coupled with the respective other channel. Therefore, the stereo signal which has to be generated has to take into account which selection the user made. If the user selected the headset, the system will generate a stereo signal in which the channel servicing the loudspeaker will not carry a signal whereas the other channel will carry the audio signal for the headset and vice versa if the loudspeaker is selected.

The Examiner states that Hinderks discloses this limitation. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Hinderks does not disclose anything beyond Cox or with regard other prior art. The cited paragraph, column 27, ll. 47-64, actually confirms that

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loudspeaker and headset are connected through separate output devices each carrying a stereo signal. Col. 27, line 54-55 expressly states that the headphone receives a stereo signal, namely that it is connected to the right and the left channel. The user merely has the option to turn on the right or left channel as stated in col. 27, line 60-64. Thus, Hinderks lacks the limitation that only one stereo signal is used whereby one channel is connected to a loudspeaker and the other channel is connected to a headset as claimed in independent claims 1, 6 and 12.

The Hinderks system uses two different converters for headset and loudspeakers. A special codec (96 in Fig. 2) for supplying a stereo signal to a headphone is provided and another stereo codec (105 in Fig. 2) is provided for supplying stereo loudspeakers. The actual connection to a set of loudspeakers is shown in Fig. 23. Again, the left channel and the right channel are coupled with a loudspeaker 604 and 606, respectively.

On the contrary, independent claims 1, 6 and 12 of the present application comprise the limitation of a processing means generating a "single" stereo signal, wherein the first channel supplies a headset and the second channel supplies a speaker. Such a configuration and respective programming of a sound system allows the use of already existing sound hardware with a single codec to couple a headphone as well as a loudspeaker at the same time, wherein a user can select which output device he wants to use. The prior art systems either need additional hardware to provide a similar functionality or cannot provide this functionality at all.

Claims 8, 9 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), as being unpatentable over Cox et al.(US Patent No. 5,790,781) in view of Hinderks (US Patent No. 6,041,295) and further in view of Sharma (US Patent No. 5,471,470) and further in view of Vrvilo et al (US Patent No. 5,913,062) .

The Examiner states that the Cox system modified by Hinderks and Sharma teaches sending a control signal to route an audio signal to either one stereo audio channel after a ringing signal is detected. Applicant respectfully disagrees as stated above. Even modified according to Hendricks or Sharma, the Cox system still lacks the

specific limitation of the independent claims, namely, that a single stereo signal is split up in a way that one channel is used for a headset and the other channel is used for a speaker. In addition, Vrvilo lacks to disclose the limitation that the ringing signal is only reproduced on one of the stereo channels. The Examiner cites col. 24, ll. 26-29 and 51-52. The cited lines state:

"The RINGIN.WAV wave file starts playing asynchronously in the WM.sub.- INITDIALOG case in the call notification dialog boxes. Playback ends when the user accepts the call, rejects the call, or the caller hangs up." col. 24, ll. 26-29

"The RINGIN.WAV file is the default wave file for incoming call notification. The user may optionally select a different wave file." col. 24, ll. 44-45

Both citations do not disclose anything about the use of different channels in a stereo signal as claimed in independent claim 12. They rather only specify the timing and the type of sound file that is used for a ringing signal. The only selection the user can make is the type of wave file used in the system. The user has no selection option with regard to the left or right channel of a stereo output. Therefore none of the cited prior art discloses the limitations of independent claim 12.

Claims 2-5, 7-9 and 13-15 are dependent claims which include all limitations of at least the respective independent claims 1, 6 and 12, respectively. Therefore, these claims are allowable at least to the extent of their respective independent claims 1, 6 and 12.

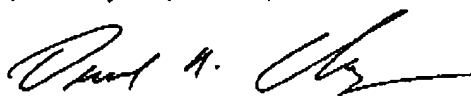
CONCLUSION

As hereby amended, claims 1-9, and claims 12-15 are pending in the application. The application as defined in the pending claims is patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103 in view of any combination of Cox et al., Hinderks, Sharma and Vrvilo et al. Therefore, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of all pending claims.

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Claim Amendment Version With Markings to Show Changes Made to the Prior Pending Claims:

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

6. (TWICE AMENDED) Method for providing audio signals within a data processing system comprising the steps of:

- receiving a digital signal representing an audio signal;
- receiving a control signal;
- processing said digital signal to generate a stereo signal having a left and right stereo audio channels and upon said control signal providing said audio signal for either a left or right stereo audio channel, wherein one of said stereo channels is provided for a loudspeaker and the other one of said stereo channels is provided for a headset;
- converting said stereo signal into analog signals.